

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LISBON 02259 181753Z

63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

IO-10 AF-06 /074 W

----- 077790

R 181710Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2549

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LISBON 2259

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: BLANK VOTE ISSUE

REFS: (A) LISBON 2070

(B) LISBON 2136

SUMMARY: ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT, SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION, IS URGING POLITICALLY IGNORANT TO SHOW CONFIDENCE IN AFM AND REVOLUTION BY CASTING BLANK BALLOT. PARTIES LEFT OF THE SOCIALISTS, ALTHOUGH SILENT ON THE ISSUE, STAND TO GAIN FROM LARGE BLANK VOTE. THE SOCIALISTS, PPD, AND CDS, MANY OF WHOSE VOTES MAY COME FROM BACKWARD POPULOUS NORTH, STAND TO LOSE THE MOST FROM HEAVY BLANK VOTE, AND OPPOSE IT. THE AFM LEFTISTS SEE IN THIS ISSUE A WAY TO WEAKEN THEIR OPPONENTS AND KEEP REVOLUTION ON COURSE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE APPEAL TO THE POLITICALLY IGNORANT TO CAST BLANK BALLOTS ON ELECTION DAY, FIRST MADE BY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBER IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LISBON 02259 181753Z

LATE MARCH (REF A), HAS TIRRED UP A GROWING CONTROVERSY.

MEMBERS OF THE AFM CULTURAL DYNAMIZATION TEAMS ARE INCREASINGLY URGING VOTERS NOT TO ABSTAIN ON ELECTION DAY IF THEY CANNOT DECIDE FOR WHICH PARTY TO VOTE, BUT RATHER TO CAST A BLANK BALLOT.

2. THE HEAD OF THE DYNAMIZATION CAMPAIGN, MAJ. RAMIRO CORREIA, STATED APRIL 17 THAT THE AFM WANTS A BIG VOTER TURNOUT TO SHOW THE AFM THAT THE PEOPLE "ARE READY TO HELP IN THE REBUILDING OF OUR LAND." THEREFORE THE AFM CONSIDERS ABSTENTION UNJUSTIFIED AND COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY. THE ELECTORAL LAW ITSELF MAKES IT AN OFFENSE TO URGE ANOTHER TO ABSTAIN FROM VOTING. THOSE PERSONS WHO CANNOT DIFFERENTIATE AMONG THE PARTIES SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE A CLEAR, THOUGHTFUL CHOICE ARE URGED TO CAST AN UNMARKED BALLOT TO SHOW CONFIDENCE IN THE REVOLUTION AND TO LET THE AFM KNOW WHAT THE DEGREE OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE REALLY IS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

3. THE PPD, THE SOCIALISTS, THE CDS, AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (REF B) HAVE SPOKEN OUT STRONGLY AGAINST THE BLANK BALLOT. THEY ARGUE THAT UNSCRUPULOUS PERSONS (READ COMMUNISTS AND THE FAR LEFT) ON THE 14,000 VOTER BOARDS MIGHT FRAUDULENTLY FILL IN A BLANK BALLOT TO THE BENEFIT OF THEIR PARTY CHOICE. THE OTHER ARGUMENT IS THAT THE PEOPLE ARE IN FACT ABLE TO DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHICH PRTY'S PROGRAM AND LEADERS ARE MOST IN LINE WITH WHAT THEY WANT FOR PORTUGAL. THE SOCIALISTS ESPECIALLY HAVE SUGGESTED THAT VOTERS MAKE EVERY EFFORT CAREFULL TO SELECT THE PARTY OF THEIR CHOICE.

4. THE COMMUNIST PARTY, ITS ALLIES, AND PRITIES FARTHER TO THE LEFT HAVE NOT MADE KNOWN THEIR STAND ON THE CONTROVERSY, ALTHOUGH THEY PROBABLY SUPPORT THE BLANK BALLOT APPEAL FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST, THEY ARGUE THAT IN THE RURAL NORTHERN DISTRICTS THEY ARE UNABLE TO COMPETE WITH CONSERVATIVE PARTIES FOR THE VOTE BECAUSE THE PEOPLE ARE BACKWARD AND IN THE GRIP OF REACTION-ARY PRIESTS AND VILLAGE LEADERS. A LARGE BLANK BALLOT VOTE FROM THOSE AREAS WOULD HELP JUSTIFY THEIR EXPECTED POOR SHOWING. SECOND, EVERY BLANK BALLOT CAST IS LIKELY TO BE ONE LESS VOTE FOR THE OPPONENTS OF THE PCP AND THE FAR LEFT.

5. THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (NEC) HAS ENTERED THE CONTROVERSY, SUPPORTING THE AFM POSITION. TO MINIMIZE THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LISBON 02259 181753Z

POSSIBILITY OF FRAUD THE NEC SUGGESTS THAT IN CASTING A BLANK BALLOT THE VOTER MAKE A LINE THROUGH THE BALLOT SO AS TO INVALIDATE IT AND PREVENT OTHERS FROM TAMPERING WITH IT. IN THE OPINION OF NEC, ABSTENTIONIS REPREENSIBLE AND A SIGN OF IRRESPONSIBILITY, WHILE A BLANK BALLOT IS "RESPONSIBLE, PATRIOTIC, AND REVOLUTIONARY."

6. COMMENT: AFM LEFTISTS FEAR THAT THE CDS AND THE PPD TOGETHER

WILL GET A LARGE VOTE, AND THAT IF THIS HAPPENS THE MODERATES
IN THE AFM WILL BE REINFORCED. TO A LESSER DEGREE, MILITARY
RADICALS FEEL TH SAME WAY ABOUT A LARGE VOTE FOR SOARES'
SOCIALISTS. THUS THE AFM -- PARTICULARLY RADICALS WHO CONTROL
THE MOVEMENT'S PROPAGANDA APPARATUS -- HAS SEIZED ON THE BALNK
VOTE AS A WAY OF GETTING THE PEOPLE TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR AFM AND
ITS REVOLUTION.
CARLUCCI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VOTING, POLITICAL PARTIES, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON02259
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750137-0702
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750438/aaaabjqe.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 2070
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BLANK VOTE ISSUE
TAGS: PINT, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006